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United Nations

Committee of Experts on Public Administration

Report on the eighth session (30 March-3 April 2009)

Economic and Social Council

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Note

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Summary

The present report contains the conclusions and recommendations of the eighth session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration, which was held at United Nations Headquarters from 30 March to 3 April 2009. The Committee, which was established by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2001/45, consists of 24 experts appointed in their personal capacities for a four-year period. At its present session, the Committee dealt with the following substantive items: (a) the human factor in capacity-building and development; (b) compendium of basic United Nations terminology in governance and public administration; (c) review of the activities of the United Nations Programme on Public Administration, Finance and Development; and (d) public administration perspective on implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health.

Based on the discussion of the aforementioned topics, the Committee recommended a draft resolution to the Council for its consideration and adoption.

[1 May 2009]

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Chapter I

Draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council

The Committee of Experts on Public Administration recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolutions 2002/40 of 19 December 2002, 2003/60 of 25 July 2003, 2005/3 of 31 March 2005, 2005/55 of 21 October 2005, 2006/47 of 28 July 2006 and 2007/38 of 4 October 2007, 2008/32 of 25 July 2008, and also General Assembly resolutions 50/225 of 19 April 1996, 56/213 of 21 December 2001, 57/277 of 20 December 2002, 58/231 of 23 December 2003, 59/55 of 2 December 2004 and 60/34 of 30 November 2005, 63/202 of 19 December 2008, all on public administration and development,

Taking note with appreciation of the pioneering work of the United Nations Programme on Public Administration, Finance and Development in supporting the Member States with analytical research, advocacy, advisory and training services of public administrations, in the areas of human capacity development, e-government development and citizen engagement during the past sixty-one years, since its inception in 1948,[1]

Taking note with appreciation of the work done by the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on its eighth session, including the papers on the human factor in capacity-building and development, mainstreaming health issues and human capacity-building in public administration and the United Nations online glossary in governance and public administration, and for its continual support for the work of the Economic and Social Council concerning the promotion and development of public administration and governance among the Member States,

Recognizing that especially because the conditions and context of development, growth and governance have changed, public administration priorities, including capacity-building for growth and development and ownership of national development, still remain critical cross-cutting issues in addressing the current global financial crisis, climate change and gender equality challenges, as well as for the achievement of the Internationally Agreed Development Goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Recognizing with appreciation the substantive contributions made by the current members of the Committee in strengthening public administration capacity at the regional, national and local levels,

1. *Takes note* of the conclusions in the report of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on its eighth session,[2] on the need for continual capacity-building for development, at national and subnational levels, and that the Secretariat continues to enhance its support for capacity-building[3] in the public sector;

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[1] See General Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 11.

[2] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2009, Supplement No. 24* (E/2009/5).

[3] See General Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 22 (f).

2. *Also takes note with appreciation* of the input by the Committee of Experts on Public Administration to the 2009 Annual Ministerial Review on the theme "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health";

3. *Requests* the Secretariat to continue to give due recognition to innovative public sector initiatives by the Member States through the flagship work of the United Nations Public Service Day and Public Service Awards in support of the implementation of the Internationally Agreed Development Goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

4. *Requests* the Secretariat to further enhance its support for capacity-building through analytical research, advisory services and online and offline training, emphasizing trust building, citizen engagement, human resources and institutional development;

5. *Requests* the Secretariat, in the light of the fact that the current economic and financial crisis is a daunting challenge to public administration, to enhance its important work for the development of public sector institutions and resources for the achievement of the Internationally Agreed Development Goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, by further developing its analytical and advisory capacity and further integrating research and analysis with the normative and operational work and by continuing to work with other partners in developing joint products;

6. *Requests* the Secretariat, in order to facilitate the advocacy and the implementation of the Plan of Action of the World Summit on the Information Society, to continue to support and facilitate the work of the Global Alliance for Information and Communication Technologies and Development, the Internet Governance Forum, and the Global Centre for Information and Communication Technologies in Parliament, and the implementation of the Plan of Action of the World Summit on the Information Society on e-government-related issues;

7. *Requests* the Secretariat to work with relevant partners, especially schools of public administration and research institutes worldwide and further develop and maintain a global knowledge base at national and subnational levels, within the United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN), of administrative strategies, public policies, expert networks, best practices and lessons learned in the areas mentioned above with the overarching objective to promote efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, accountability and participation in the public sector, and to support the achievement of the Internationally Agreed Development Goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

8. *Approves* the convening of the ninth session of the Committee.

Chapter II
Organization of the session

A. Duration of the session

1. The Committee of Experts on Public Administration, established by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2001/45, consists of 24 experts appointed in their personal capacity by the Council upon their nomination by the Secretary-General. The Committee held its eighth session at United Nations Headquarters from 30 March to 3 April 2009.

B. Attendance

2. The session was attended by 20 members of the Committee. Observers from organizations of the United Nations system and from intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations also attended.

3. The session was attended by the following Committee members: Luis F. Aguilar Villanueva (Mexico), Ousmane Batoko (Benin), Marie-Françoise Bechtel (France), Rachid Benmokhtar Benabdellah (Morocco), Emilia T. Boncodin (Philippines), Jocelyne Bourgon (Canada), Luiz Carlos Bresser-Pereira (Brazil), Mario P. Chiti (Italy), Mikhail Dmitriev (Russian Federation), Jennifer Dorn (United States), Edgar Alfonso González Salas (Colombia), Werner Jann (Germany), Taher H. Kanaan (Jordan), Pan Suk Kim (Republic of Korea), Florin Lupescu (Romania), José Oscar Monteiro (Mozambique), Peter Anyang' Nyong'o (Kenya), Siripurapu Kesava Rao (India), Prijono Tjiptoherijanto (Indonesia) and Gwendoline Anne Williams (Trinidad and Tobago).

4. The following members could not attend: Barbara Kudrycka (Poland), Anthony Makrydemetres (Greece) and Wang Xiaochu (China). Owing to her new assignment in the United Nations Development Programme, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi (South Africa) could no longer act in her capacity as a Committee Member.

5. The list of observers who attended the session may be viewed on the United Nations Intranet (see http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan029825.pdf).

C. Agenda

6. The agenda of the Committee for its eighth session was as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Human factor in capacity-building and development.
4. Compendium of basic United Nations terminology in governance and public administration.
5. Review of the United Nations Programme on Public Administration, Finance and Development.

6. Public administration perspective on implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health.

7. Proposed programme of work and agenda for the ninth session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration.

D. Election of officers

7. The following members are serving as the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Rapporteur during the current session:

Chairperson:
Jocelyne **Bourgon** (Canada)

Vice-Chairpersons:
Taher H. **Kanaan** (Jordan)
Luis F. Aguilar **Villanueva** (Mexico)
Peter Anyang' **Nyong'o** (Kenya)

Rapporteur:
Pan Suk **Kim** (Republic of Korea)

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Chapter III
Summary of proceedings and conclusions

A. Work of the Committee

8. At the opening session, the Chairperson welcomed the experts and introduced the main theme of the session: the human factor in capacity-building and development. Two introductory speeches, pronounced respectively by the President of the Economic and Social Council and the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, framed the discussions of the Committee by putting a spotlight on the role of human factor in development. They underlined the importance of investing in human capital, through both adequate training and capacity-building, and of placing due focus on institution-building and leadership development.

9. The Director of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs then made a short administrative statement thanking the Committee Members for their participation and recognizing the Secretariat staff members that were serving the session. The Director also expressed her appreciation for the significant work and contributions of Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi who, having accepted a new position at the United Nations Development Programme, could no longer act in her capacity as a Committee member.

10. The Committee proceeded with the election of its new officers for 2009. Peter Anyang' Nyong'o was nominated as Vice-Chairman for the Africa region and Pan Suk Kim was nominated as Rapporteur. The Committee then unanimously adopted the proposed agenda for its eighth session.

B. Human factor in capacity-building and development

11. The note by the Secretariat (E/C.16/2009/2), along with inputs from the members of the Committee, set the overall parameters for the Committee's discussions. Emphasizing the need for the reconfiguration of human resources management regimes in line with the specific development challenges, the paper covers the important place of human resources development in the public service as well as in the private sector and civil society. The paper also covers the different modalities of matching talent to functions, including innovations in selection and recruitment in the public service; pay reform as capacity-building; and equality and diversity in public administration. Finally, the impact of mainstreaming information and communications technology into human resources management strategies, in particular, the beneficial impact of e-learning in cutting costs, improving organizational performance and increasing the quality of public service delivery, is discussed.

Human resources management regime: future trends

12. Marie-Françoise Bechtel's presentation highlighted human resources management as an important and integral part of capacity-building for development. Defining it as the set of tools and approaches to recruit, train and develop professional public employees, she identified two general categories of forces that

can ensure effective human resources management, namely, the institutional and managerial solutions.

13. On the institutional plane, (a) adequate internal promotion mechanisms; (b) forward-looking career management based upon demographic analysis and needs assessment; (c) participatory public service with satisfactory built-in mobility; and (d) effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms were outlined. On the managerial plane, (a) participatory and inclusive public service charts; (b) open and interactive meetings of the managerial staff; (c) continuous training and capacity-building towards the development of a qualified workforce; and (d) ethical public service were stressed.

14. In her presentation, Ms. Bechtel emphasized that the choice of the set of measures to be applied would depend, inter alia, on whether the dominant human resources management regime was based upon merits or promotion, whether it relied mostly on general or specialized skills as well as the degree of autonomy of the public administration in relationship to the Government and the degree of centralization in the public administration system.

15. The Committee discussions concentrated on four distinct human resources management issues: (a) the non-monolithic nature of public administration; (b) the impact of economic factors, particularly of the current crisis, on human resources management; (c) the shifting boundaries between the political and administrative fields; and (d) the individualist/materialist versus the public/cognitive motivations of public servants.

16. The first factor vis-à-vis the non-monolithic nature of public administration refers to the difficulties involved in defining public administration as one uniform notion and practice when its several components, such as specialized agencies or independent entities, might abide by different sets of forces. For instance, while the finance ministries tend to attract the best talent in several parts of the world, other agencies are often left out because they are devoid of human capital. The divergence between public finance and other subsectors in public administration, such as education or health, is due not only to the gaps in remuneration, but also to the mismatching of educational priorities with the prestige attached to certain public careers. A kindergarten teacher, for instance, generally needs to complete less years of education and is rarely as well remunerated as an educational inspector, even though the teacher's job is neither less important nor less demanding.

17. The second factor vis-à-vis the impact of the economic situation on human capital in public administration can be illustrated by the increasingly common practice of outsourcing in public administration, due particularly to the effects of the current financial crisis. More open competition, including increased lateral mobility from the private sector to the public sector, has also occurred, even though attempts at creating corporate manager types of civil service leaders have run into difficulties in some countries.

18. The third factor vis-à-vis the shifting boundaries between the political and the administrative relates to the degree of interdependence between the two realms. Political nominations of higher level career civil servants, for instance, might help in creating the much needed cycle of trust. Civil servants, in general, are also often appreciative of the opportunities of mobility that shifts in political dynamics might present.

19. The fourth factor vis-à-vis the individualist/materialist versus public/cognitive motivations for public servants is also crucial in determining the shape of human capital in public administration. Often, it is not for monetary compensation that citizens choose to join the civil service, but rather to serve their country or for the opportunity to influence decision-making and to participate in policy formulation. Therefore, the idea of the pursuit of the public good rather than self-enrichment is part and parcel of public service.

20. In addition to the above, other human resources management issues are also critical in capacity-building and development. Some of these issues are remuneration, incentives and benefits, the indispensable need for the top political leadership to recognize human resources management as an important field of its own, and adequacy of human resource development programmes for public servants at all levels of hierarchy. HRM is also important in creating non-discriminatory bureaucracies. In this regard, the gender perspective must be mainstreamed into all areas of policymaking, management and leadership development so that women and men enjoy equal access to decision-making and equal treatment as recipients of services.

Accountability, transparency and citizen trust in government

21. The presenter, Mr. Werner Jann, underlined the pivotal role played by accountability in strengthening the cognitive and participatory capacities of citizens; developing the professional and advisory capacities of intermediary organizations; and consolidating the learning and analytical capacities of government and public managers. The presenter also emphasized the need for building trust as a notion feeding into accountability. In building trust, the degree of inclusiveness and accountability of internal decision-making (input legitimacy) and the overall effectiveness of the system (output legitimacy) are important. An example can be found in the field of auditing where the independence of auditing institutions has benefited trust and trust building mechanisms significantly.

22. The nature and direction of the relationship between trust, accountability and government performance change, depending on the degree of overall development in a country. A number of studies show a decline in trust in both developing and developed countries. Some countries in the developing world, despite a low level of trust in their Governments, have managed to perform well. On the contrary, declining public trust in government has been observed in the developed world, including in the best performing Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries. These trends have lent support to the proposition that strengthening public service requires not only interaction at the internal level (within the administration and the Government) but also at the external level (with society and other governance actors).

23. Lack of professionalism and corruption in the public service are often institutional problems at their roots. It is thus propitious to examine the institutional arrangements, structures, systems and practices of the public service while making them conducive to civic engagement, transparency and accountability. In so doing, it is necessary to strengthen the State and its institutions. In this vein, a rule-based professional efficient, effective, transparent and responsive public service may be instrumental, particularly when accompanied by citizen and civil society participation, consultation and involvement.

24. Alternative models of state and institution-building can also be viable in different contexts and circumstances. Envisaging distinct models of institution-building in different contexts is beneficial also because public service is not independent of cultural resonance or value systems. While this is not to suggest a culturalist perspective, it is to ensure that idiosyncrasies are acknowledged when drawing on best practices cross-nationally.

25. In addition to the alternative models of state- and institution-building, it is also important to find common frameworks for analysis of the human factor in development. For instance, a focus on system-level processes and interactions of government institutions with their citizens with focus on civic results rather than formal democratization per se can yield enlightening results.

Serving the information age

26. The presenter, Jennifer L. Dorn, underscored the important role of Web 2.0 in at least three arenas: (a) as an online collaborative tool in effectively and integrally engaging stakeholders and citizens in decision-making processes; (b) as a tool to solve even complex and controversial problems in government; and (c) as a useful and innovative mechanism in managing crises, or even preventing them from happening through more effective and timely use of cross-cutting, relevant data.

27. The Committee's discussions centred around two broad issues, namely: (a) how to promote a greater and more effective use of information and services offered by the public sector; and (b) how to address the current and potential barriers to information and communications technology usage, while controlling its negative side effects.

28. On the first issue, there was consensus that the implementation of e-tools enhances government interaction with citizens while strengthening accountability. An open and honest dialogue with citizens, whether online or face-to-face, can lead to better government policies and services. The issue is how to organize participation and prioritize in order to avoid inundating the public with information. In that regard, the Committee agreed that Governments need to improve their current information technology infrastructures, particularly with respect to the introduction and the implementation of broadband technology, to enable applications to run smoothly and to provide citizens with fast and easy access to offering information and services. Providing citizens with the e-services they need, as opposed to what the government thinks they need, would also lead to greater participation and use of these services.

29. On the second issue, it was stressed that many developing countries do not have cutting-edge technology. Digital divide and issues of equity were cited among the barriers to information and communications technology usage. In most developing countries, the Internet penetration rate is low, leaving vast majorities of people with virtually no access to online information and knowledge. To mitigate the effects of such barriers, the alternative methodology of investing in mobile technology was suggested by the Committee. Mobile technology can be more cost-effective and can lead to a more portable e-society. This is especially important since the penetration rate for mobile phones is significantly higher when compared to personal computers.

30. The Committee concluded that some public administration systems did not have the necessary capacity and aptitude to effectively implement the e-tools that would foster greater citizen participation. The issue of low pay in the public sector when compared with the private sector was cited as one factor obstructing the retention of top quality information technology staff within Governments, thus calling attention to the importance of capacity-building overall.

Leadership and learning

31. In her presentation, Gwendoline Williams outlined various ways in which effective leadership and leaders in the public service can be created. Broadly, strengthening human resources, restructuring and strengthening the public service, implementing a performance management framework at all levels and undertaking competency profiling are essential. Specifically, four factors play a pivotal role in leadership development in the public service: a citizen-centred perspective, cohesive multi-channelled service, fluid cross-government service, and proactive communication and education.

32. The Committee discussions on how to build and strengthen the role of leadership in the public service while also promoting lifelong learning concentrated on two guiding perspectives: the role and importance of the individual action and the centralism of institutional frameworks. Both of these perspectives are important for enabling transformative leadership development in the public service. Also decisive are more specific human resource strategies, policies and tools, which might include: (a) clarity with regard to the development strategy and objectives; (b) identification of approaches for the selection of change management leaders within different governmental departments; (c) linking of training with the overall leadership development plan; and (d) recognition of the different leadership skills required in different administrative regimes and political systems.

33. From an individual perspective, leaders in the public service were defined as those public officers who can take initiatives, make and act on decisions, take calculated risks and get things done, while at the same time act as good team players who can bring cohesiveness and unity to the organization. From an institutional perspective, the institutionalization of such leadership qualities and the establishment of adequate incentive mechanisms were stressed. Special emphasis was put on the developing world, particularly Africa, where civil service systems have fallen short of such kinds of leadership qualities and institutionalization.

34. The Committee also drew attention to the importance of proper attitude and emotional resilience, in addition to technical knowledge and legal know-how, in developing leadership skills. It was proposed that creating and strengthening such skills requires a variety of tools and approaches, including change management, and techniques and leadership development strategies such as coaching, mentoring and customized empowerment via the innovative and effective use of information and communications technology. It was also stressed that the understanding of the leadership notion as a black box in its core was important. This means that the personal qualities as well as the unique on-the-job experiences of individuals are significant factors in building leaders in the public service. In this regard, the civil servant's esteem and esprit de corps of the organization and of the overall public administration system is critical.

Overall comments and conclusions of the Committee

35. The old ways of governments doing business are radically changing. Citizens want information to be made available for them instantaneously and in the format of their choice. They not only want to be able to make transactions online, but they also want to convey their opinions and concerns to all levels of government through online discussion. It is important to understand the crucial role of information and communications technology tools to enable such a change and to raise citizens' awareness of the information and services provided by government. A simple way of accessing information, through a single sign-on for instance, would greatly simplify the accessibility of information and the delivery of e-services.

36. Leadership development challenges in the public service are multifarious. The right balance between a generalist and a specialist body of public servants; the adequate management approach, including results-based and process-led models, are some of these challenges. The need to ensure local ownership of leadership development programmes and the decisions with regard to following a hiring process directed towards high achievers, versus including the disadvantaged segments of societies in public service, are others. In overcoming these challenges, effective and ethical leadership development plans and programmes well aligned with the long-term national development strategies are paramount.

37. The Committee's main conclusions regarding the four subthemes under human factor were as follows: (a) in the face of the current crises, there has to be much stronger emphasis on the human factor in capacity-building and development on the part of both the United Nations and the Member States; (b) human resources management should be fully integrated into development by repositioning it as a strategic function in public administration and by investing in the development of competent and professional human resources managers in the public service; (c) an efficient, professional and high performing civil service goes hand in hand with legitimate institutions, which, on the one hand, must implement public policies in an efficient way, and on the other hand, must be accountable, transparent and inclusive; (d) concerted efforts should be made to improve the information technology skill sets of both public employees and citizens, while the enabling power of e-tools must be adequately harnessed to improve governance and help in achieving the development goals; (e) versatility of the notion of leadership must be recognized in order to link it effectively with the human factor in capacity-building and development.

Recommendations for human resources management regime: future trends

38. Member States need to strengthen the institutional and human capacities of their public services to enable them to provide more and better services to meet the national development objectives and the internationally agreed development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals.

39. In its technical cooperation and advisory services, the Secretariat needs to put more emphasis on capacity-building for effective human resources management and development.

Recommendations for accountability, transparency and citizen trust in Government

40. Member States need to review their governance and public administration institutional arrangements, structures, systems, and practices and make them more

conducive to civic engagement, transparency and accountability as key components of trust, which is critical in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

41. Because accountability is crucial for government performance, Member States need to strengthen the cognitive and participatory capacities of their citizens; the professional and advisory capacities of intermediary organizations; and the learning and analytical capacities of governments and public managers.

42. The Secretariat should support the deepening of understanding and the transfer of knowledge to enhance the importance of institutions and human resources capacity-building, while working to underline the importance of civil society and citizen participation.

Recommendations for serving the information age

43. Given the potential power of information and communications technology in improving the delivery of public services and the creation of knowledge, Member States need to anchor capacity-building in the public service on, inter alia, the application of appropriate information and communications technology.

44. Both donors and multinational information technology companies should increase their financial support to developing countries in order to build their information technology capacities.

45. The Secretariat should increase the provision of online training using UNPAN as an efficient and cost-effective tool of human resources capacity-building in various fields.

Recommendations for leadership and learning

46. Member States need to strengthen the capacities of management development institutes and universities so that they sustain capacity-building in the public service for current and future generations.

47. Member States need to pay particular attention to the development of the capacities of human resources managers in the public service to ensure that competent public administration professionals are available to provide professional advice to Governments in matters related to public service and administration.

48. Member States, in both developing and developed countries, are requested to pay special attention to the importance of innovative approaches to learning practices, including executive coaching and mentoring.

49. The United Nations should recognize and promote some regional centres of excellence that can offer medium to long-term training and promote cooperation among Governments of the region. Such activities can help in building hard technical skills and human capacities, and can also promote partnerships across public administration bodies.

C. Compendium of basic United Nations terminology in governance and public administration

50. The Chair of the Committee Working Group on basic United Nations terminology in governance and public administration presented an online glossary developed with the support of the Secretariat. Considering its limited mandate, the

Committee agreed to start with a number of terms selected from the list proposed by the Committee, in the understanding that the list could be expanded at a later stage by Committee members or through contributions from other sources. The Committee concurred that it was important to group the terms into clusters, for both conceptual and pragmatic reasons.

51. The Committee congratulated the Chair of the Working Group, Mario Chiti, and the Secretariat for the work undertaken in developing the United Nations public administration glossary, which contains to date over one hundred terms. The Committee stressed that the glossary could contribute significantly to reducing uncertainty about key terms in governance and public administration, and that it could facilitate the growth of a common administrative culture, respecting the autonomy of all legal orders. The Committee appreciated the glossary as an online tool open to contributions from various sources. It noted, however, that while it was important to make it open to external inputs, it was equally important to exert quality control over such contributions.

Comments and conclusions of the Committee

52. The Committee acknowledged that the glossary represented an important legacy and it recommended that: (a) the Secretariat ensure the institutional longevity and relevance of the glossary; (b) the term "glossary", in lieu of "compendium", be used to better describe its content; (c) the terms in the glossary include, where possible, more than one definition to cover differences in the administrative systems of countries; (d) the hard copies of glossary be made available in all the official languages of the United Nations; (e) the glossary be a living document that can be modified as needed; and (f) the glossary adopt an explanatory rather than a normative approach while it is being built incrementally.

D. Public administration perspective on implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health

53. The Secretariat presented a note (E/C.16/2009/4) on mainstreaming of health issues and human capacity-building in public administration.

54. A public administration perspective on global public health necessitates moving beyond a sector-specific approach while directing more attention to the people as the direct recipients and sponsors of health services. One way to do that is to effectively mainstream health issues within public administration. All institutions need to be made aware of their current and potential future impact on public health and thereby revise their administrative work accordingly.

55. Linked with the mainstreaming of health issues is the increasing demand for horizontal and vertical cooperation among concerned actors. Coordination and interrelation among key sectors such as, inter alia, water, sanitation, education and finance under the leadership of the health sector, are more essential than ever in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. This sort of cooperation requires an upgrading of the required skills and participatory approaches among those involved. This is where the human factor in public administration comes into play as one of the key supply-side variables in public health. In this regard, primary

health care is of the utmost importance and must be linked with all public health initiatives. Primary health care is a catalyst for a healthier community, while promoting healthier lifestyles and increasing access to technology and medication.

56. On the demand side, capacity-building in the health sector should be aligned with the priority needs of citizens. To do that, particular emphasis must be placed on the consolidation of leadership skills, such that effective response mechanisms to institutional complexities and challenges can take shape and develop. Adequate training and the creation of incentives for health-care professionals must go hand in hand with institutional strategies that are apt to engender collaboration and to foment participation in decision-making processes.

57. The presenter, Manuel Dayrit, of the World Health Organization (WHO), outlined four broad policy directions for reducing health inequalities and improving health for all, as follows: (a) tackling health inequalities through universal coverage; (b) putting people at the centre of care; (c) integrating health into broader public policy; and (d) providing inclusive leadership and effective governance for health. He put special emphasis on primary health care as a field in which public administration has an important role to play, particularly in creating the conditions for the health workforce to improve its reach and services to citizens in countries, particularly those in which there are critical shortages, improper distribution and poor productivity of resources. New reforms are needed in order to ensure universal access to health services and equality as regards the benefits of prevention, promotion, care and rehabilitation. This will be achieved by having institutions and financing models that are in harmony with those goals.

58. The second presenter on the same agenda item on global public health, Edgar Gonzalez Salas, also stressed the critical role of primary health care in achieving the health-related Millennium Development Goals. He enumerated four priority areas for the building of human capacities in global public health, namely: (a) establishment of educational programmes designed with awareness of the demand for services and the new models of health services that are equitable, efficient and effective; (b) generation of a structure of incentives that are in line with the priority reforms and public policies; (c) forging of public administrators capable of understanding the context, objectives, challenges and problems; (d) fostering of leaders in the public health sector with the capacity to integrate policies and to marshal the required support from other national and international authorities.

59. The Committee agreed on the above-mentioned issues and emphasized the important role of the State in delivering health-related products and in bridging the health divide through, inter alia, public health diplomacy and a shift from a systems-centred to a people-centred approach to health-care services. In each country, health institutions must be ready for dialogue and interaction with their counterparts in other countries, as well as with those dealing with global management of health issues, such as WHO, in order to face the increasing global challenges of prevention and care.

Comments and conclusions of the Committee

60. The following recommendations are put forth to Member States:

(a) Raise awareness in all sectors and at all levels of government about their respective responsibilities and opportunities to promote, restore and maintain public health and to provide health delivery services;

(b) Develop an integrated health policy, which is coordinated with all other policies that have direct or indirect impact on public health and health services;

(c) Adopt participatory and citizen-centred approaches to developing national health policies, including via the adequate use of information and communications technology tools;

(d) Promote reforms of health institutions; establish a strategy based on primary care, universal access and equity in health care;

(e) Cooperate with each other and with global institutions on a regular basis in order to avoid possible risks posed by a global threat as a result of new global pandemic and illnesses, the control of which is beyond the national borders of countries;

(f) Promote long-term funding, including public-private partnerships where appropriate, for research and development, and ensure that the health sector does not suffer from budgetary retrenchments during economic crisis;

(g) Involve civil society organizations to enhance awareness on health issues among different stakeholders, including public service providers.

E. Review of the activities of the United Nations Programme on Public Administration, Finance and Development

61. The Secretariat presented a note (E/C.16/2009/3) highlighting the major activities that it undertook in 2008 under the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance.

62. The note reflected on the current process of organizational changes that have been undertaken by the Secretariat with a view to streamlining the operations of the Programme and strengthening its capacities in addressing the needs of the Member States in pursuit of efficient and effective public administration systems that are able to achieve national development objectives. The note, which was presented to the Committee, for its review and endorsement, also included the main activities proposed for implementation during the period 2010-2011. The Committee was requested to provide feedback to the Secretariat on both the scope and direction of the reorganization and the proposed activities. In order to consolidate available resources to conduct training events of a larger scale and to allow more resources for the production of higher quality outputs with stronger impact, the number of outputs planned for the next biennium was decreased.

63. Three major functional areas of the Secretariat in public administration were described as (a) institutional and leadership development; (b) public service delivery improvement through the application of information and communications technology; and (c) public administration in support of the United Nations development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Comments and conclusions of the Committee

64. The Committee commended the Secretariat for its presentation and the extensive preparatory work undertaken, and welcomed the new proposed approach.

65. The Committee noted that the current period of unfolding economic and financial crises warranted a review of the role of the State and the market, and the enacting of new policies and mechanisms. Public administration had a vital role to play in restoring public trust and economic stability, promoting equity, and formulating regulatory frameworks to reduce further economic risk. The Committee called upon the Secretariat to respond in a strategic and more proactive way, to the needs related to the reshaping of the roles of public administration in the light of the challenges stemming from the global crisis and for setting the tone for moving forward by contributing to the requisite deliberations in the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

66. The Committee also took note of the need for the Secretariat to target specifically the least developed countries, economies in transition, conflict and post-conflict countries and other developing countries, respectively. Concerned United Nations agencies should assist Member States in devising and implementing national social strategies, such as health care and education, which constitute the core areas of public administration.

67. The Committee acknowledged the need for the Secretariat to create an enabling network and environment for policymaking. It stressed that the Millennium Development Goals, with special focus on the African region, could possibly serve as practical anchor for its deliberations in the near future. The Committee also proposed that the focus of the Secretariat be moved towards results-based activities. It also emphasized the importance of balancing advocacy, analytical and research work and technical cooperation activities.

68. The Committee requested the Secretariat to:

(a) Continue giving due recognition to innovative public sector initiatives by the Member States through the flagship work of the United Nations Public Service Day and the Public Service Awards in support of the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

(b) Enhance its work on the development of public sector institutions and resources for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, by further developing its analytical and advisory capacity and further integrating research and analysis with the normative and operational work and by continuing to work with other partners in developing joint products;

(c) Support and facilitate the work of the Global Alliance for Information and Communication Technologies and Development, the Internet Governance Forum, and the Global Centre for Information and Communication Technologies in Parliament, and the implementation of the Action Plan of the World Summit on the Information Society on e-government related issues;

(d) Work with relevant partners, especially public administration schools and research institutes worldwide, and further develop and maintain a global knowledge base of administrative strategies, public policies, expert networks, best practices and lessons learned at the national and subnational levels, within the United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN), and with the overarching objective to promote efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, accountability and participation in

the public sector, and to support the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

69. The Committee made the following specific recommendations with respect to the modalities of its own proceedings:

(a) In order to fully utilize the expertise in the Committee, introduce subcommittees, each of which would link with one of the focus areas of the Secretariat; the subcommittees would need to continue interactions throughout the year via Internet tools, and would report on their progress during the annual meeting of the Committee;

(b) Enhance interaction among the Secretariat staff and the Committee members during the year preceding the annual meeting of the Committee;

(c) Enrich Committee deliberations by the relevant initiatives to be proposed by the participating observers;

(d) Focus on cross-cutting themes, such as institutional and human resources development in the public sector, leadership development in public service, e-government development and participatory governance, linking them closely with the priorities of the Economic and Social Council and those of the General Assembly;

(e) Consider the option to meet twice instead of once a year in a less formal setting.

F. Proposed programme of work and agenda for the next session of the Committee of Experts and preliminary review of the draft report of the Committee

70. The Committee agreed upon the main theme, "Managing challenges, seizing opportunities and recognizing the role of public administration on emerging issues", for its ninth session.

71. The Secretariat proposed that the ninth session of the Committee be held from 19 to 23 April 2010 and the Committee approved the following agenda for adoption by the Economic and Social Council:

(a) Managing challenges, seizing opportunities, and recognizing the role of public administration on emerging issues;

(b) Review of the United Nations Programme on Public Administration, Finance and Development;

(c) Public administration perspective on the theme of the 2010 annual ministerial review: implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments.

72. The Committee adopted the draft report on its eighth session.

Annex I

List of documents

Document symbol	*Agenda item*	*Title or description*
E/C.16/2009/1	2	Provisional agenda and organization of work
E/C.16/2009/2	3	Human factor in capacity-building and development
E/C.16/2009/3	4	Review of the Activities of the United Nations Programme on Public Administration, Finance and Development
E/C.16/2009/4	5	Mainstreaming of health issues and human capacity-building in public administration

Annex II

Suggestions for future sessions of the Committee of Experts

As the eighth session of the Committee of Experts marks the end of the term of the current members, the Chairperson, the Honourable Madame Jocelyne Bourgon, requested the members of the Committee, in particular those members that have been proposed to serve during the 2010-2013 term, to give their views and comments for the benefit of the future Committee of Experts. The comments of the members are summarized below:

1. The proposed programme of work and agenda for the next session of the Committee should be circulated to the new members before the meeting. In addition, the new members should be provided with copies of all the resolutions of the Committee and a short note on the topic to be discussed.

2. Considering the fact that emerging challenges is the topic chosen for the next session, the Committee could focus on health and education in developing countries as its main topic.

3. It was also suggested that the current economic and social crisis should be addressed by the Committee since the United Nations should have a say in these matters as the G-20.

4. Countries that have won the United Nations Public Service Award should be invited to make presentations and share their experiences with Committee members, as this would give a more prominent role to innovation in public administration.

5. While there is value to abstract/theoretical discussions, it was acknowledged that it is equally important to discuss practical and sectoral aspects of public administration, such as education, water management, land policies, etc.

6. Even though the creation of thematic subgroups within the Committee is considered by many as an important step, it was noted that a decision needs to be made regarding the thematic groups, which could only be taken by the new members during the next session.

7. A proposal was made to invite the current members of the Committee to attend the next session for purposes of lessons learned and information-sharing.

8. Committee members recommended holding informal sessions in addition to the yearly formal session.

9. Although the Committee has tried to involve observers during its discussion, more efforts should be made to take advantage of the expertise of the observers so that they can work together with the Committee more closely and disseminate the outputs of the Committee globally.

10. The Secretariat was requested to continue communicating with the current Committee members via e-mail and keep them abreast of future activities of the Committee. The Secretariat is also requested to share information with the permanent missions to the United Nations and particularly with those of Committee members' countries.

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